



## CHAPTER XVII.

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### ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

SIXTEENTH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

**W**ITH an inexpressible sense of tenderness and respect for the unique and providential character of Abraham Lincoln, we come to the task of setting in order a sketch of his life. He stands in our history by the side of Washington in excellence of character and the greatness of his life work for human well-being. Yet he is so near us who now live, and had such a tenderness for humanity, such a sensibility to human suffering and sorrow, and such a commanding respect for personal rights, that he seems to us a great brother of mankind, for whom we have a personal affection. He is not to us like other great men, afar off and grand, but near and dear in his greatness.

Washington wrought out his greatness by a long life of conspicuous toil and self-sacrifice in high places of trust and honor. Lincoln came suddenly before the world, a genius in philanthropic wisdom and power; and yet in sterling worth and commanding ability they were much alike. One was a child of fortune, the other of poverty; one the associate of the educated and the great, and the other of the illiterate and humble; and yet they were equals in all that most commands the affection and gratitude of humanity. They will always have the worshipful affection of the great and good of all the world.

## ANCESTRY AND EARLY LIFE.

Abraham Lincoln was born February 12, 1809, in Larue county, Kentucky. It is a picturesque and attractive region of country, at that time two-thirds timbered and fertile and the other third in rounded knolls and hills—"barrens"—covered with scattered oaks and other trees. About a mile and a half from Hodgenville, the county seat, near Nolin creek, in a rude log cabin, our child of the woods came into the hands of his humble parents. After two years they moved to a cabin on Knob creek, six miles from Hodgenville.

Abraham's father's name was Thomas. He had two brothers, Mordecai and Josiah, and two sisters, Mary and Nancy. Their father's name was Abraham, who was shot while at work in his field by an Indian who had crept stealthily upon him. This Abraham had come from Virginia. The Virginia Lincolns came from Berks county, Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Lincolns were Quakers, and may have come from England, or, more probably, from the Lincolns of Massachusetts, among whom the family names Abraham, Mordecai and Thomas abounded.

Abraham Lincoln went from Rockingham county, in the Shenandoah valley, Virginia, to Kentucky about the year 1780. His children were all born in Virginia. Thomas Lincoln, by the early death of his father, was thrown out among the early settlers, to live as he could by wandering from cabin to cabin and working as he could get opportunity. Until he was twenty-eight years old he worked around for others, without money, without object, without education. At that age he married Nancy Hanks, who was also born in Virginia. He took her to the little cabin which he had built, where were born three children, Sarah, Abraham and Thomas. Thomas died in infancy; and Sarah after her marriage. She had no child. Abraham's mother was a slender, delicate woman, pale, sad, heroic and yet shrinking. He always held her memory in the profoundest respect, and said once to an intimate friend, with his eyes suffused with tears: "All that I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother—blessings on her memory."

While at Knob Creek, Abraham went to school a few months, to two different teachers. His parents were both religious persons—Baptist communicants. Their pastor, Parson Elkins, came once in a few months and preached in the neighborhood. His coming was a great event in the Lincoln family, and deeply impressed the sensitive minds of Sarah and Abraham. From Parson Elkin's fervent and eloquent sermons came Abraham's first ideas of public speaking, as well as his first impressions of religion.

In Abraham's eighth year, his father concluded to go west and north of the Ohio river. He sold his rude home for three hundred dollars and took his pay in ten barrels of whisky and twenty dollars in money. He made a flat-boat and launched it upon Rolling creek, loaded it with his whisky and heavy household goods, and pushed off. Soon after he reached the Ohio he wrecked his boat and lost two thirds of his whisky and some of his goods and farming utensils. Getting help, he gathered up what he could, repaired his boat and floated on till he reached Thomson's ferry, Spencer county, Indiana, where he landed, and fixed on a place to live, eighteen miles from the ferry. Leaving his goods in the care of a settler, and crossing the river at the ferry, he took a bee line through the woods for his home. This was in the autumn of 1816. The family soon started with their bedding and light goods packed on three horses, for their new home.

In their new place in the heavy forest of Indiana, they built a cabin; cleared up land as fast as they could, and tride to find rude comfort in close proximity to the wild beasts. They had been here but two years when Mrs. Lincoln died. This was an inconsolable sorrow to the sensitive, deep-thinking children. Her worn out body was buried under a tree near the cabin. But it was a great pain that they could have no religious burial service. Abraham had had some further attendance upon a school, and had learned to write a little, so, after consultation, it was agreed that Abraham should try his skill in writing a letter to Parson Elkins to ask him to come and preach a funeral sermon on his mother's death. This was no doubt the first

letter he ever attempted to write. If Parson Elkins could have known that it was from a future president of the United States, it would doubtless have been preserved. Great was their comfort in getting a letter, in a few weeks, from Parson Elkins, setting a Sunday some months ahead, when he would be there, and preach as desired. The mystery of writing now seemed to have a sacred meaning, and the marvels of an education to grow sublime in the thought of these afflicted children of the woods. They thought and longed, talked and waited the time out, sending word everywhere for twenty miles around to their forest neighbors, when lo, at the appointed time, the good man came, an angel of comfort and blessing indeed. It was the coming of the Lord to their poor hearts. The day was pleasant; the people came to the number of some two hundred; and sitting on the stumps, logs and ground around the grave of the mother of our great president, they listened to the gospel of immortality and divine love as preached by this Saint John of the wilderness, crying unto men, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." That day was one of the Lord's precious days in making the character of Abraham Lincoln. The tender reverence of that holy day never left his spirit.

Abraham's mother had some education, and a few books which she read often to her two children. She read to them from the bible such parts as was best for them. The influence of these lessons was very great on the receptive heart of her son. The poor father sat by and listened, only to value an education all the more because he had it not. On this account he embraced every opportunity to give Abraham as much as he could.

The mother died in 1818, so that Abraham could not have been quite ten years old.

He had three different teachers while living in Indiana, but studied only a few weeks with each. All his school opportunities, both in Kentucky and in Indiana, did not amount to more than one year. But he read much—not many books, but the few he had. He read the bible so much that he could repeat many parts of it. *Æsop's Fables* he read till he knew them by heart. *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Weems' Life of Washington*, and a *Life of*

Henry Clay, he read over and over. These books were food for his hungry mind.

The great life of Washington impressed him deeply, and in it he got the story of our national life, and the principles on which the republic started. Henry Clay, as a living man, won his interest.

In a little more than a year after his mother's death his father married a Mrs. Sally Johnston, of Kentucky, who brought with her three children by a former marriage. She was a good step-mother, and the united families lived in peace.

At this early age Abraham began to show the elements of character for which he was afterward noted—great good-nature, fondness for sport, and story-telling. This last quality was marked in his father. When about eighteen years of age he built a flat-boat and took the products of the farm to Louisiana. The next year he was applied to, by a trading neighbor, to take a boat-load to New Orleans for him, in company with his son. These voyages gave him a glimpse of the world and some knowledge of business. At this time he had become a vigorous youth, six feet and four inches high, athletic, muscular and enduring. His reading, his two journeys to New Orleans, his quick wit, his story-telling and great sociability, his honesty and freedom from every vice, his powerful and athletic frame, and the odd and attractive peculiarities of his ways and conversation, already made him the center of attention among his neighbors. Everybody liked him, and confided in him. In his circle he already had the first place.

#### EARLY MANHOOD.

But the family got tired of heavy-timbered Indiana, and when Abraham was a month past twenty-one, started for the prairie state of Illinois, and settled on the Sangamon river, about ten miles from Decatur. After Abraham had helped his father build a cabin, fence in, break up and plant to corn ten acres of prairie, he announced his intention of striking out for himself. He at once sought work among the neighboring farmers, breaking up prairie, splitting rails, putting up fences and

chopping wood, or doing any work that offered. From this work he got the name of "rail-splitter." There was no money then, and he split rails for the cloth to make his clothes, for his board and the things he needed. One who used to work with him at this time says that he was the roughest looking person he ever saw; was tall, angular, ungainly, dressed in flax and tow garments, out at the knees; was very poor, and often walked six or seven miles to his work, yet was welcome at every house and made friends as fast as he made acquaintances.

About this time he was applied to to take a flat-boat to New Orleans, for one Denton Offutt, a trader. But as Offutt could not find a boat, he arranged with Lincoln to build one on the Sangamon river, seven miles from Springfield. Two other men were joined with him. They had twelve dollars a month each. They completed the boat, loaded it with hogs, and young Lincoln and one of the men took it to New Orleans and sold the load and boat, with such good results that Mr. Offutt put Abraham in charge of a mill and store at New Salem. Store-keeping was a new business to him, but he soon became such an object of interest that the people came from far and near to trade with him. Several incidents are related of him while here that gave him the name of "Honest Abe." By a mistake he had taken six and a quarter cents too much of a woman on a bill of goods. He did not sleep till he had carried it to her, on foot, some miles away. By another mistake, he put too small a weight on his scales for a pound of tea, and, after closing his store late in the evening, carried the rest of the tea to the woman, who had got less than she paid for.

There was a bullying set of young roughs about New Salem who tried the mettle and strength of every young man who came into the neighborhood. One of them came into the store in a profane and abusive way when some ladies were in. Abraham begged him to desist from such language till the ladies had gone. He finally said: "If you are aching for a whipping, just go outside till I am done with these ladies, and I will come out and attend to you." As good as his word, he went out and laid the fellow on his back, and, in the utmost good nature, rubbed his



face with smartweed till he begged lustily for quarter. Then he let him up, got water and washed his face, and made the bully and his associates his friends by the operation. A few other such experiences with the rough elements of that community won them all to him. They could always get fun but never a fight out of him; and he soon became their ideal good fellow. His imperturbable good nature made him the master of every situation and won him the victory in every coarse onslaught upon him.

While engaged in Offutt's store, Abraham began the study of English grammar, borrowing a copy of Kirkham's grammar of L. M. Green, a lawyer of Petersburg, and walking eight miles to get it. He used to talk with Mr. Green of his aspirations and ambitions; said his family seemed to have good common sense, but none of them had become distinguished; that possibly he might. He had talked with some men who had the reputation of being great, and he could not see as they differed much from other men. It is evident, from all we get of him at this period, that he had begun to feel the ground-swell of the grand impulses that were in him and to think of the greatness possible to all true souls and the service they may render their country and kind. He read much while at New Salem. He devoured newspapers, particularly the Louisville "Journal," so long edited by the witty and brilliant Prentice.

#### LINCOLN A SOLDIER.

While Mr. Lincoln was at New Salem the Black Hawk war broke out. Mr. Lincoln enlisted himself, and enough in his vicinity to make a company. When the company was ready to organize, two men were named for the captaincy, Lincoln and a Mr. Kirkpatrick, who had been such an oppressive employer of young Lincoln, at one time, that he had left him. When the company was collected the two candidates stood at a little distance, and each man in the company went to the man he wanted for captain. When the word was given nearly all went to Lincoln, and those that did not immediately left the other man and went over to him. Lincoln said of it: "I felt badly to see

him cut so." Here was an opportunity to be avenged for his old employer's abuse of him; but he seemed to have no such feelings, but rather pitied him.

In the army Captain Lincoln was a great favorite. His wonderful fund of good humor; his kindness to his men; his patient industry and tireless energy; his readiness to join in all their sports and outdo them all in their athletic feats, made him captain indeed.

Mr. Lincoln often spoke of his early war-experience in a jocose spirit, but it had lessons and opportunities for him, as everything he touched seemed to have. Zachary Taylor was in the Black Hawk war also, so that two embryo presidents had a part in conquering the fierce savage.

When the soldiers from Sangamon county reached home, an election was just coming on. They at once proposed Captain Lincoln as a candidate for the legislature. He was now twenty-three years old, just emerging from obscurity. He was a whig, an admirer of Henry Clay, the story of whose life had captivated him when a boy. Andrew Jackson then led the democratic hosts. Sangamon was a democratic county, and Illinois was a democratic state. There was apparently no hope for the promotion of a whig. Yet Abraham Lincoln had adopted the politics of the minority, and accepted the nomination as a minority candidate. In New Salem he got almost the entire vote, but in other parts of the county he lost the election.

Mr. Offutt had failed in business. Mr. Lincoln was mustered out of the military service, was not elected to the civil service, and therefore was without employment. What should he do? He thought of learning the blacksmith trade. He was handy with tools; something of a general mechanic; he must do something. While meditating upon this matter, a friend bought the goods in the store in New Salem, at a venture, and asked Mr. Lincoln to take an account of his stock of goods. The result of it was that Mr. Lincoln and another man bought the goods. The other man proved a trifler and Mr. Lincoln's speculation brought him considerable in debt to his friend of whom he had bought. He afterward spoke jocosely of this



indebtedness as "the national debt." While in this store he was appointed postmaster, by President Jackson. This he liked, for he could read all the newspapers; but when the store "winked out" as he said, he put the postoffice in his hat and carried it wherever he went.

#### LINCOLN A SURVEYOR.

But now again came the question, what should he do? Just as he was considering this, the county surveyor proposed to him to do the surveying about New Salem. He knew nothing of surveying, but arranged to do the job, went right at the study, and soon was running lines and staking out lots. It is said that his surveying has stood the test of time. This surveying led him to a wide acquaintance in the county. He was much among the farmers, in their homes, at their gatherings. He was in the villages professionally, and came close to all the people. And everywhere he was a marked man. Everybody liked him. His quaint ways, his fascinating stories, his knowledge and common sense, his freedom from selfishness, his warm friendship and readiness to lend everywhere a helping hand, and his transparent simplicity and good nature, with his long, gaunt, peculiar figure, made him the most popular man in the county.

#### LINCOLN A LEGISLATOR.

In 1834, two years after his first candidacy, he was again a candidate for the legislature. Now his friends persuaded him to make speeches, which he said he would do if they "wouldn't laugh at him." His quaint speeches told. They were like himself, somehow, strangely influential. He was elected. In the same legislature was Major John T. Stuart, who had conceived a strong personal interest in him in the Black Hawk war. Mr. Lincoln said and did but little in this legislature, but observed and thought much. It was a school to him.

Mr. Stuart suggested to him to study law, and offered to lend him books. He walked to Springfield for the books and studied and surveyed by turns. He was often buried in his

studies, lost to everything else. Some said he was crazy. He was simply absorbed in his life's work, now open to him after a singular succession of experiences, that seemed to have no relation to this study, yet led him in a roundabout way to it.

In 1836 he was renominated to the legislature. The canvass was a very warm and able one. Many strong men were in the field. Mr. Lincoln had now had two years of thorough study. His mind had been stirred to action. The political field was alive with agitation. He had recast his thoughts in his late studies, and now with a man's grasp of mind he used them in his speeches. There was a meeting of candidates at Springfield for discussion, and a great gathering of the people. Ninian W. Edwards opened the discussion for the whigs. Doctor Early followed him for the democrats. He was then the great debater in Illinois on that side. He had the faculty of merciless severity which he used against his antagonist, who desired an immediate reply; but Mr. Lincoln got the floor and proved himself master of the situation. He took up Early's speech and riddled its weak places, shook it to pieces and ridiculed it, all the time weaving in his own views with such masterly adroitness that he aroused a great enthusiasm in the audience. Cheer on cheer followed his strong points. He kindled into a flame of impassioned speech. His countenance was transformed. His eyes were fire; his stature majestic; his voice powerful and persuasive. The effect of his speech was so electrical and triumphant, that from that hour he was held as one of the great orators of the state. And yet he was but twenty-seven years old. He went to the legislature that year with a strong body of men, himself recognized as their peer. Among them were several who afterward held high national positions; one of them was Stephen A. Douglas.

The great work of that legislature was to institute a system of internal improvements and remove the capitol to Springfield, both of which objects were included in one bill. Mr. Lincoln was put forward to do the leading work for the bill. The bill was carried and it made him a very popular man in his county, and especially in Springfield.

But this session of the legislature was more remarkable for what seemed to be an insignificant matter. Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas met here for the first time. Mr. Douglas was but twenty-three years old, the youngest and smallest man in the house—"the least man I ever saw," Lincoln said. The state was overwhelmingly democratic. The slavery agitation was getting strong all over the country. The democratic party was pro-slavery; the whig party not anti-slavery, but complacent and conciliatory toward "the institution." To show its loyalty, the democratic party in the Illinois legislature, took pains to pass some pro-slavery resolutions. Stephen A. Douglas was zealous for these resolutions, and then and there took his public position on the side of slavery and its bad policy and inhumanity, to be carried on to an untimely grave and a disappointed and unfruitful life. Abraham Lincoln had seen slaves sold in New Orleans, and had felt a pang of sorrow for the poor victims of human cupidity and power. His judgment, his conscience, his heart, were against slavery. Politically he held it as bad policy to hold slaves even where the constitution allowed it. Into the territories the constitution could not carry slavery, he said. Only the people of the territories could establish it there. So on this mild anti-slavery ground he took his stand in this legislature, against the democratic policy, in advance of the whig policy, in what seemed a hopeless minority, to rise in power and influence and win a victory for his principles throughout the world and an immortality of glory and renown for himself.

When the resolutions were passed, Mr. Lincoln and Dan Stone, whig members from Sangamon, entered their protest upon the Journal of the House, with their reasons, which were, that "While the Congress of the United States has no power to interfere with the institution of slavery in the different states, and while the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than abate its evils, still the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy, and Congress has power, under the constitution, to abolish slavery in the District

of Columbia, though this power ought not to be exercised unless at the request of the people of said district."

This was Mr. Lincoln's mild position, then taken, and there he stood until military necessity compelled him, as the commander-in-chief of the Union army, to grant freedom to all the slaves.

The positions then taken by Douglas and Lincoln were argued by them through many years, and on many platforms, and their arguments had more to do in bringing the subject in a political form before the people than any other. They must be pronounced the foremost men in this battle of the giants.

It must be kept in mind that Mr. Lincoln had not yet entered his profession; was very poor; practicing, surveying, to earn his bread while studying law; that he walked to and from the legislature, a hundred miles each way, and yet had already become a central figure around which was soon to gather the moral and political forces of one of the greatest movements of the world. His strong common sense, becoming bright with the light of genius, won him favor wherever he was known, and fixed upon him the eyes of some as one who might develop great power.

He had long been in the habit of putting his thoughts into writing. He wrote much. This gave him the power of clear statement. His knowledge was limited, but what he knew, he knew well; and he thought and wrote about it, till it became a part of himself.

With all his joviality, he was a serious man, and studied profoundly the problems of life. "Oh! how hard it is to die and not be able to leave the world any better for one's little life in it," he said to a friend in his early manhood. In his seriousness, he was sometimes oppressed to melancholy. He often meditated upon the sad side of life, and groaned in spirit over the corruptions of the world. His own life was a profound study to him. Opening so obscurely and humbly, and coming on by such unpromising ways, hindered and oppressed, and set back and defeated so often, where was it leading to? He felt an inexpressible yearning for knowledge, usefulness and recognition;

but would he ever attain these? He was childlike in his simplicity and honesty. He assumed nothing, but was always just himself and nothing else.

Mr. Lincoln, from his early youth, was religious in spirit. He had no professional or dogmatic religion, but was tenderly reverent toward the great Father of his spirit, and the souls of his children. His early bible study, his "angel mother's" reverent lessons, and Parson Elkin's influence, made impressions that he never lost. He adopted no creed, joined no church, yet respected all.

In his later readings he had fallen in with some works of science. He was much interested in geology. It brought him close to nature and nature's God. He studied human nature everywhere. Even when jovial he was studious, and through the apparently trifling side of his life, found avenues into serious reflections and reverent communings.

#### MR. LINCOLN A LAWYER.

In the autumn of 1836, Mr. Lincoln was admitted to the bar, having done nearly all his studying by himself, and having been a surveyor, and a legislator, and a general reader of politics and the news in the meantime. While studying, he had attended some courts, and familiarized himself a little with their proceedings. He received at once an invitation from Major Stuart to become his law partner in Springfield. Mr. Lincoln was already well known in Springfield, and honored for what he had done to make it the capital of the state. In April, 1837, he took up his abode there.

Mr. Lincoln was now well established in the principles in life to which he always adhered; was a genuine temperance man, openly and actively on the side of that great reform; was a politician of moderately reformatory tendencies; was a humane man, and profoundly sincere and honest.

He had had a curious and marked experience at New Salem. This rude country village had served him well as a place in which to get a start in life; and he now left it with many misgivings and questionings as to his future career.

The next July he was summoned to an extra session of the legislature, and very soon after Mr. Stuart was elected to Congress; so that their legal practice was somewhat interrupted. The next year he was re-elected to the legislature. At once he was recognized as the leading whig member, and he came within one vote of being made the speaker. The partisan aspects of the state had changed much. The result of Jackson's financial policy had, as the whigs said, brought the cruelly hard times of 1837, under which the country was yet suffering terribly; the gag-law in Congress, under Van Buren, which refused to consider all petitions and papers relating to slavery, was unpopular with all free-speech men, and the two together being democratic measures, had weakened the democratic and strengthened the whig party. No business of great importance came before this legislature.

Mr. Lincoln's notoriety soon brought him legal business, which he attended to with the utmost fidelity. It was not long before he secured a great reputation as a case and jury lawyer. His good humor, fairness, his knowledge of jurors and persuasive power over them, and skill in managing cases, gave him an extensive business, so that in all the circuit of counties through which he practiced he was often on nearly all of the important cases.

In 1840 Mr. Lincoln was again elected to the legislature, and served because it was at home, but he refused longer to accept this office.

About this time a strange episode in Mr. Lincoln's life occurred, not at all creditable to his judgment or moral courage, according to our notions of these things. A poem appeared in the Sangamon "Journal" sharply reflecting on James Shields, a young lawyer of Springfield, afterward General Shields and United States senator. It was anonymous, but written by a young lady. Shields was fiercely angry about it, and must know the author or fight the editor, Simeon Francis. The young lady was a personal friend of Mr. Lincoln. Francis went to Lincoln for counsel. It was understood that somebody must fight a duel with the hot-blooded young Shields or be



branded as a coward. Lincoln told the editor that if the young man should again demand the author's name to tell him that he, Lincoln, held himself responsible for the poem. When Shields was told this he at once sent a challenge to Lincoln. It was accepted, and Lincoln chose broadswords as weapons, and put himself under training. The duel was to be on Bloody Island, in the Mississippi river; but friends interfered and prevented it, but its contemplation was a stain on both their reputations.

It has been charged upon Mr. Lincoln that he indulged in smutty stories unfit to be heard by chaste ears, and his biographers accept the charge as true, but explain it on two grounds: First, that it is common in the members of the legal profession, who in their business become familiar with the filth and smut of humanity; and second, that he told these stories because of their wit, and not because of their smut. They say he was intensely fond of wit, and had no sympathy with human filth. But no explanation atones for the blemish of such a practice. It is no part of a true man, and no matter who indulges in it, nor under what circumstances, it is not only a fault but a vicious practice. We can well understand how Mr. Lincoln had been familiar with such jokes and stories from his boyhood, by the society in which he had mingled, but that when he became a man he did not revolt against their use and discontinuance is against his taste and moral sensibility.

In 1840 Mr. Lincoln dissolved his partnership with Mr. Stuart, and formed one with Judge S. T. Logan, of Springfield. He now resolved to devote himself more to his profession, but each new political canvass called for his strong services.

In 1842 he married Miss Mary Todd, a daughter of Hon. Robert S. Todd, of Lexington, Kentucky. Miss Todd had resided for some time at Springfield. They did not set up a new home at once, but boarded at the Globe Tavern. His private letters at this time indicate much pleasure in his new relation.

The next year he began to have Congressional aspirations, but his friend Baker got the nomination, and he helped elect him.

Mr. Lincoln was a party man, and trained himself to keep step with his party. His ideal statesman was Henry Clay, and he was a close party man and went himself no farther in any direction than he could carry his party.

In 1844 Henry Clay was the whig candidate for the presidency. Mr. Lincoln supported him with his whole heart and power, speaking in many parts of Illinois and Indiana, and everywhere putting all his energy and enthusiasm into the canvass. But he was defeated, and great was Mr. Lincoln's chagrin and sorrow. It weakened his respect for the popular judgment. He had built up great hopes for the country on his party and his political idol, hopes not so well founded as he thought. Neither his party nor his idol had the merit he attributed to it. The whigs of the country were woefully disappointed. Mr. Clay had captivated many as he had Mr. Lincoln. Everywhere there was grief and disheartenment among the defeated partisans of the great Kentuckian.

In 1846 Mr. Lincoln went to Lexington, Kentucky, to hear Mr. Clay's speech on the gradual emancipation of the slaves. The speech was written and read. It disappointed him. It was cool and commonplace. The fire and force he had expected were not in it. The great orator and statesman were not manifest in the performance. He was introduced to Mr. Clay, who was cool and condescending, though he knew what a friend and helper he had in Mr. Lincoln. He invited Lincoln to his home at Ashland. It was such a gracious expression of friendship as was infinitely pleasing to our humble Illinois devotee of the great sage of Ashland. He went and was graciously entertained and patronized by the honored whig leader. But he came away a sad though a wiser man than when he went. Mr. Clay, while polite, polished and hospitable, was so conscious of his superiority, so condescending, as to make his guest painfully sensible of his common littleness. Mr. Clay was proud, princely, dignified; Mr. Lincoln was humble, plain, childlike; how could they affiliate? He felt that Mr. Clay was overbearing and domineering, not only to him, but to everybody. And so he saw his idol broken. It was a good lesson to the partisanship and idolatry

of Mr. Lincoln to a great leader. It taught him that principles rather than men are to be followed and have the devotion of true men.

#### MR. LINCOLN A CONGRESSMAN.

December 6, 1847, Mr. Lincoln took his seat in the Thirtieth Congress, as a member of the Lower House. He was elected the autumn before, and made an active canvass of his district, which gave him the highest majority it ever gave to a whig. In his canvass he discussed the annexation of Texas, the war with Mexico and all the affiliated measures of the pro-slavery democracy, protesting against the whole; and also the importance of a protective tariff to the industries of the country which were then suffering, as he claimed, by a democratic reduction of the tariff.

Mr. Polk was then president, and it was his custom, in his messages, to set forth the raiding practices of Mexico upon the territory of the United States, as though against the laws of nations, and patiently borne by us till forbearance had ceased to be a virtue, and, that war had been declared against Mexico only when she had practiced war upon us, when the simple facts were that we had sent our army all the way from the Nueces to the Rio Grande, some two hundred miles into the Mexican territory, and provoked the Mexican soldiers to raid upon our outposts. Mr. Lincoln took up this matter in a series of resolutions, which he offered, asking of the president information as to the spots where our settlements had been invaded, the particular spot where our peaceful citizens had been murdered, by Mexican soldiery, and for detailed information as to particulars. They were so full of "the required spots" where Mexican outrages had been committed upon our quiet citizens that they got the name of the "spot resolutions." In view of the facts in the case, they made the president's messages ridiculous. Mr. Lincoln made a characteristic speech in behalf of the resolutions, but, as the whigs were in the minority, the resolutions were laid on the table. The whigs in Congress were in a dilemma. They did not believe in the war; knew it had been provoked and forced upon the Mexicans

by our government to filch from them their territory, and yet, if they did not vote supplies to carry it on, and support our soldiers in their dangerous exposures, they were called unpatriotic and barbarous. In a speech in Congress, January 12, 1848, Mr. Lincoln, in a cool, clear and exact statement of the facts in the case, showed how the country stood in relation to the war, and how it placed the whig party.

On the first of June, 1848, the whig convention met at Philadelphia, to nominate a candidate for the presidency. Henry Clay was the idol of the party, but he had been defeated. Mr. Lincoln had seen him and lost his former confidence in him. Mr. Lincoln was in the convention, and did not approve of nominating Clay.

General Taylor, a nominal whig, though he had not voted for forty years, had come back from the Mexican war covered with the glory of a military chieftain. His career had been a succession of victories, which the democratic papers all over the country had magnified into most magnificent and brilliant exploits of military genius. His dispatches had been the simple, unpretending facts of what his army had done. Their modesty was praised as much as his military genius. He was the hero—the Cincinnatus of the hour. The democrats made his glory and fired the country with it, and the whigs in convention caught it upon their banner. They nominated General Zachary Taylor as their candidate. Of course it put them in an awkward position to glorify General Taylor and denounce the war that made him their candidate and was sure to elect him. But this was their good luck, and Lincoln urged his nomination and that they should make the most of the tide in his favor. He counseled saying as little as possible about the beginning of the war which the whigs were in no way responsible for.

Mr. Lincoln took up the canvass in behalf of General Taylor with great zeal, going first from Washington to New England and making several speeches there. He canvassed Illinois and in his own district gave Taylor almost as large a vote as he had got himself when elected to Congress.

Early in the winter Mr. Lincoln returned to Congress, and

went as a recognized anti-slavery man, who would do as much against slavery as the constitution would permit him to do. He was a constitutional man, loyal to that great charter of American liberty as to the rights of man and conscience. In his first session in Congress he had voted forty-two times for the Wilmot Proviso, had stood with John Quincy Adams stoutly for the right of petition, and was counted as an ally of Joshua R. Giddings and men of his convictions and conscience. During this session he prepared a bill for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia with the consent of the people of the District. But some of the people who agreed to his plan at first, withdrew from it, and time was not permitted him to begin anew, and so his bill fell through before coming to a vote. His service in Congress closed with honor and profit to himself.

As Mr. Lincoln became more acquainted with educated men and society, he felt more intensely his lack of early education; and he returned from Washington to his home resolved to make up for his deficiency as much as he could. So he took up the study of geometry and went through the first six books of Euclid. His success among educated men surprised him. He felt a constant gratitude to them for their appreciation of his motives and their kindness to him. He was always self-deprecating, and often wondered how others could think so well of him. This self-deprecation was greatly magnified by his conscious lack of an education.

#### RETURN TO HIS PROFESSION.

On his return from Congress Mr. Lincoln took up again the practice of his profession; and now for a number of years had one of the most peaceful and enjoyable portions of his life. He had attained a conspicuous place among his countrymen; had formed a large acquaintance among the great and good; had put his original obscurity far behind him; had in his profession a way to obtain an honorable living and be useful; had a wife and little family; had books, friends, appreciative society; all of which he enjoyed in their full measure.

By the distinguished lawyers who knew him well and practiced with him, he was profoundly appreciated as a man and lawyer. Judge Caton, said of him: "He applied the principles of law to the transactions of men with great clearness and precision. He was a close reasoner. He reasoned by analogy and enforced his views by apt illustrations. His mode of speaking was generally of a plain and unimpassioned character, and yet he was the author of some of the most beautiful and eloquent passages in our language, which, if collected, would form a valuable contribution to American literature. The most punctilious honor ever marked his professional and private life."

Who will ever know what society, literature, learning, the country and humanity, have failed to have that is rich and grand, because his great soul was cheated of an education by the hard fortune of his early years?

Judge Breese, said of him: "For my single self, I have for a quarter of a century, regarded Mr. Lincoln as the finest lawyer I ever knew, and of a professional bearing so high toned and honorable as justly, and without derogating from the claims of others, entitling him to be presented to the claims of the profession, as a model well worthy the closest imitation."

Judge Drummond, said of him: "I have no hesitation in saying that he was one of the ablest lawyers I have ever known. No intelligent man who ever watched Mr. Lincoln through a hard-contested case at the bar ever questioned his great ability. With a probity of character known of all, with an intuitive insight into the human heart, with a clearness of statement which was itself an argument, with uncommon power and felicity of illustration—often it is true, of a plain and homely kind—and with that sincerity and earnestness of manner which carried conviction, he was, perhaps, one of the most successful jury lawyers we have ever had in the state. He always tried a case fairly and honestly. He never, intentionally, misrepresented the evidence of a witness, or the argument of an opponent. He met both squarely, and, if he could not explain the one, or answer the other, he admitted it. He never misstated the law according to his own intelligent view of it."



In 1852, on the death of Henry Clay, Mr. Lincoln delivered a eulogy on that famous statesman of his day. The eulogy was calm, and probably quite less enthusiastic than he would have given before his visit to Ashland. The closing words are worth repeating here. "Such a man the times have demanded, and such, in the providence of God, was given us. But he is gone. Let us strive to deserve, as far as mortals may, the continued care of Divine Providence, trusting that in future national emergencies, he will not fail to provide us the instruments of safety and security." No instrument, since the days of Washington, has seemed to the lovers of our republic, so providential as Mr. Lincoln himself. To no other have his words such a profound application. And it seems almost certain, that in the generations to come, he will be held as the preserver of the country of which Washington was the father.

But great national events were in progress. The northern section of the country was rapidly overgrowing the southern. The great northwest was inviting settlements. The western prairies were attracting the hardy and enterprising from the eastern states and Europe. It was becoming clear that the balance of power was soon to be in the north. The political leaders of the south who were devoted to slavery, were getting uneasy and absolute in their determination to rule or ruin. In 1850, the free state of California was admitted to the Union. There was no balancing slave-state to come in with it. California had grown to a free state on territory won from Mexico by the pro-slavery war. This was a result not in the original calculation.

In the whig canvass for General Scott, in 1852, Mr. Lincoln took but little interest, and General Pierce, who ran against him, was elected.

In 1854, the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which shut slavery out of the whole northwest, was abrogated, with a view to force slavery into Kansas and Nebraska. This was an act of bad faith, which stirred Mr. Lincoln deeply. Northern democrats, particularly Mr. Douglas, acted in complicity with the south in the matter, and this stirred northern blood far more

than the action of southern men. It was understood that Mr. Douglas was the author of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, which opened those territories to slavery. It made him unpopular with many of his friends, and when he went home to Chicago and attempted to make a speech in defense of his work, he was prevented.

A few weeks after, at the autumnal fair at Springfield, he made, before a great audience of representative men from all parts of the state, his defense of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, which Mr. Lincoln heard, and the next day replied to in one of the most masterly efforts of his life. He spoke three hours, but no complete report of his speech was made. The press, which sympathized with him, gave enthusiastic accounts of it. It is certain that it inaugurated a new political era in Illinois. A few days after, Mr. Douglas spoke again in Peoria, and Mr. Lincoln followed him with much the same effect. This speech was reported. Mr. Douglas retired, and they held no more debates that season. But a mighty wave of thought and emotion was started among the people which would not stop.

On May 29, 1856, a convention was held at Bloomington, Illinois, of all men in the state opposed to the democratic party. Mr. Lincoln was present, and made a most powerful speech. One biographer says of it: "Never was an audience more completely electrified by human eloquence. Again and again during its delivery they sprang to their feet and upon the benches, and testified by long continued shouts and the waving of hats how deeply the speaker had wrought upon their minds and hearts. It fused the mass of hitherto incongruous elements into perfect homogeneity; and from that day to the present they have worked together in fraternal union." The republican party was there organized in Illinois. It sent delegates to the next national convention with Mr. Lincoln's name as a candidate for the vice-presidency. But Mr. Dayton was nominated with Mr. John C. Fremont, and Mr. Lincoln was only thus formally introduced to the nation.

The Kansas-Nebraska excitement grew rapidly. Mr. Lincoln, like all northern men of his opinions and character, grew

more and more resolute in the republican doctrine to stop the spread of slavery, and lead it into its present constitutional localities. And with this resolution grew a stronger and stronger opposition to slavery itself.

#### THE GREAT DEBATE.

In 1858 began the celebrated campaign for the United States senatorship between Mr. Douglas and Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Lincoln began his discussion of the great subject then before the country in June, at the state republican convention in Springfield, with the following almost prophetic opening :

“If we could first know where we are, and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed. ‘A house divided against itself cannot stand.’ I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved. I do not expect the house to fall, but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the states, old as well as new, north as well as south.”

The speech went on to show what the advocates of slavery, then in charge of the government, had done to open the territories to slavery, to prevent them from rejecting slavery; to carry slaves into the free states, and what they were preparing to do, to open the way to force slavery, by a Supreme Court decision into the free states. But this result must be prevented, he contended, by putting the government into new hands which would put it back into its original condition in which it should

move toward the ultimate extinction of slavery. He closed in these words: "We shall not fail—if we stand firm, we *shall not fail*. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but sooner or later, the victory is sure to come."

He made two or three other speeches, and Mr. Douglas made some, to one or two of which he replied, when he made a proposition to Mr. Douglas to canvass the state together. But Mr. Douglas objected on the ground that his arrangements were too far made, but proposed to join with him in a discussion at seven places in different parts of the states. This arrangement was made and these discussions were held, awakening an immense interest among the people, not only of Illinois, but of the whole country. The great issue of that time was laid bare before the people. The discussion went over the whole country as a republican campaign document, and was read and talked of till the whole reading north became acquainted with the issue as there presented.

Mr. Lincoln lost the election to the Senate, but he gained the ear and confidence of the republican north. The discussion consolidated the republican party, intensified the northern opposition to slavery, and still more the opposition to the party in power which was using all its energy to carry out the grasping purposes of a few radical pro-slavery leaders. The ultimate result of the discussion was that Mr. Lincoln won the presidency, the destruction of slavery, a country all free, and a martyrdom that put his name where it stands among the "immortal few that were not born to die."

In 1859, at the republican state convention at Decatur, two rails from a lot of three thousand which Mr. Lincoln had made when he first came to the state, were brought into the convention where he was soon to speak, considerably ornamented, and bearing this inscription: "Abraham Lincoln, the 'rail-splitter,' candidate for the presidency in 1860."

During the latter part of 1859 and the early part of 1860, Mr. Lincoln traveled into Kansas, Ohio, New York and New England. His visit in Kansas was an ovation. The people knew they had a friend in this great-hearted man, and they

came in immense throngs to see and hear him. They knew him, his principles and power, already, by reading his discussions, and they wanted to look at his person and hear his voice. In Ohio he found a hearty reception, and his speeches kindled the usual enthusiasm. He went on to New York, under an arrangement with Reverend Henry Ward Beecher, to speak in Plymouth church. He heard Mr. Beecher, which was a great pleasure to him; but found that arrangements had been made for him to speak in Cooper Institute. He was anxious about his speech. He knew his lack of polish; his crude appearance; his want of education; now to come before the educated, polished and strong men of this great city, was a trial to his courage. The great hall was packed with brains, culture, worth. The magnates covered the platform. William Cullen Bryant, whose poems he had read and admired, introduced him. As he rose and stood in his great height, six feet and four inches, in that dazzling throng, he was bewildered. What business had he, a poor, awkward, uneducated man of the wild west, to stand there and expect to be heard with patience? He was embarrassed and humiliated; but he had something to say, and he must say it. He began with a low voice and a slow utterance. He laid down his initiatory propositions with great deliberation. The great audience listened with breathless attention. It was something new, a new man, manner and statement; it was clear, convincing, brilliant. He had got but little way on in his terse and strong work, before a vigorous round of applause assured him that he was understood and appreciated. He now began to be at home; his manner became more free and confident; his voice filled and yielded readily to the sentiment. He became master of the situation, and went through to the close carrying his great audience with him in rapturous admiration of his argument, rhetoric and unique and wonderful illustration. The whole performance was so original, incisive, marrow-searching and powerful that it became the great political and literary feast of the season. The papers spread it and eulogized it; the people read it and talked about it. The writer of this sketch well remembers the enthusiasm he felt in reading the

speech, and in the conviction that a great and brilliant star had risen in the political firmament.

Mr. Lincoln made many valuable acquaintances in New York, who served him and the country well in his time of sore need.

He had a son in Harvard college whom he went to see; and while there he made speeches in different places, always with similar results. It was a study to him to know why educated New York and New England so readily accepted and enjoyed his humble efforts at public speaking; why college presidents and professors came to hear him and set him before their students as an example in many particulars. Perhaps never in his life had he been more appreciated than in the speeches made on this eastern trip. They were the best he had ever made. He was really all the while improving. They told mightily for his future and for his country. His manner of treating the southern people in these speeches was very acceptable to the people of the north. He was fair, candid, kind—even affectionate toward them. He was southern born; his wife was southern born and reared. His heart was large, and he really loved everybody. This good nature so pervaded his speeches that they won upon the public. Then they were intensely logical and searching. They went to the roots of right and wrong; they magnified just principles; loved freedom and hated slavery; they were put in simple but choice language; they were full of nut-shell statements of important facts and principles; and, beyond all this, they were unique in their quaint and crystalline originality.

#### THE COMING STORM.

During all this great discussion, which was getting more and more intense and thorough, there were constant threats of secession and disunion from the southern leaders. The northern people were but little moved by these threats. They counted them as the bravado of the fire-eating radicals in which the solid southern people took little part. They believed the *people* of the south loved the union and would stand by it. They could



see nothing but disaster and wretchedness to the south in any attempt to be separate from the north, peaceably or otherwise. The north had numbers, wealth, mechanism, skill, productive ability, a laborious people, who had never been found wanting in patriotism far surpassing the south; and the people of the north could not believe the people of the south would be so unwise as to deliberately commit themselves to the folly of secession—to their own certain ruin. Moreover, they thought the people of the south wanted to maintain slavery, which they would be sure to lose if they attempted disunion.

In April of this year, 1860, the national democratic convention met in Charleston, South Carolina, only to fail to nominate Mr. Douglas, or any other man. It adjourned till June to meet in Baltimore. In the meantime the radical southern element nominated John C. Breckenridge, of Kentucky, and the constitutional union element nominated John Bell, of Tennessee. The regular convention at Baltimore nominated Mr. Douglas. This break-up forced by the southern radicals made sure the election of the republican nominee. The republican convention met in Chicago, June 16, a very large and enthusiastic convention. William H. Seward and Mr. Lincoln were the leading candidates. On the third ballot Mr. Lincoln was nominated. So it turned out that Mr. Douglas and Mr. Lincoln ran for the presidency at the same time, the one the leader of a broken and discordant party, the other of an enthusiastic and united host.

Mr. Lincoln soon began to realize both the pleasures and annoyances of his candidacy. Friends came from everywhere to see him. Nobody seemed to have so many friends as he. He had to abandon all attempts to see them at his house, and resort to the executive chamber of the state house. It seemed sure to his great party, now full of enthusiasm for its principles, that he would be elected, and office-seekers became abundant. That which began as a pleasure soon began to have its vexations. He accepted the nomination in humiliation. He had always distrusted his own capacities, and this feeling of incompetency often overwhelmed him. He was intensely honest and earnest in his republican principles. They had come to be his religion.

He felt that a crisis had come to his country when the spread of slavery must be stopped, or the foul leprosy would spread over the whole country and the republic would become a slavery more unendurable than any monarchy. In one of his anxious, desponding moods, he one evening asked Mr. Newton Bateman, superintendent of public instruction, whose office opened into the executive chamber, to come in. He locked the doors and they sat down and talked. Mr. Lincoln had done this to unbosom himself to his friend. He took a little book from his drawer containing the names of all the voters of Springfield and how they would vote. They ran them over together. He was particular to note the names of the ministers and leading churchmen. At length he said in great sadness: "Here are twenty-three ministers, of different denominations, and all of them are against me but three; and here are a great many prominent members of the churches, a very large majority of whom are against me. Mr. Bateman, I am not a Christian — God knows I would be one — but I have carefully read the bible and I do not understand this book," and he drew from his bosom a pocket New Testament. "These men well know," he continued, "that I am for freedom in the territories, freedom everywhere as far as the constitution and laws will permit, and that my opponents are for slavery. They know this, and yet with this book in their hands, in the light of which human bondage cannot live a moment, they are going to vote against me. I do not understand it at all."

Here he stopped, overcome with emotion. Then he walked the room, seeking to regain self-possession. At length, his cheeks wet with tears, he said, with a slow, tremulous voice: "I know there is a God, and that he hates injustice and slavery. I see the storm coming, and I know that his hand is in it. If he has a place and work for me, and I think he has, I believe I am ready. I am nothing, but truth is everything. I know I am right, for Christ teaches it, and Christ is God. I have told them that a house divided against itself cannot stand, and Christ and reason say the same; and they will find it so. Douglas don't care whether slavery is voted up or voted down, but God

cares, and humanity cares, and I care; and with God's help I shall not fail. I may not see the end, but it will come, and I shall be vindicated, and these men will find that they have not read their bibles aright."

In saying this his manner was indescribably solemn. After a little silence he resumed: "Doesn't it appear strange that men can ignore the moral aspects of this contest? Revelation could not make it plainer to me that slavery or the government must be destroyed. The future would be something awful, as I look at it, but for this rock on which I stand [the New Testament, which he still held in his hand], especially with the knowledge of how these ministers are going to vote. It seems as if God had borne with this thing [slavery] until the very teachers of religion have come to defend it from the bible [quite common in the south], and to claim for it a divine character and sanction; and now the cup of iniquity is full, and the vials of wrath will be poured out."

It was not often that Mr. Lincoln so revealed his inner self; but Doctor Bateman was his intimate friend, whose excellent christian character he profoundly respected. This conversation reveals one of the secrets of Mr. Lincoln's power with the people. He was profoundly confident of being on God's side in these great matters of slavery and the existence of the republic. Mr. Lincoln lived two lives, one a profoundly thoughtful and religious one, the other an outward, jocose one. Few saw much of his inward life, though his great speeches gave enough of its flavor to win and carry all true souls who heard or read them.

But the great canvass moved on. The votes of the nation were cast and counted. Mr. Lincoln was elected. The friends of equality and liberty were jubilant. The friends of slavery were sullen and threatening.

At once secession began to be prepared for. South Carolina, the hot-bed of nullification under Calhoun, was now the breeding place of secession. On the tenth of November, 1860, four days after Mr. Lincoln's election, a bill was introduced in its legislature calling out ten thousand volunteers. On the tenth

and eleventh of December, its senators in Congress resigned. A convention was called on the seventeenth, and on the twentieth South Carolina seceded, and arranged for a convention of seceding states at Montgomery.

On the tenth of December the United States secretary of the treasury, Howell Cobb, resigned. On the eighteenth, Floyd, the secretary of war, accepted a requisition from South Carolina for her share of United States arms for 1861. Meetings were held all over the south to prepare for secession. On the eighth of January, 1861, a caucus of southern senators at Washington counseled immediate secession. Soon Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas, accepted the counsel. Forts, and arsenals and arms were seized in all these states. In Mr. Buchanan's cabinet the southern secretaries boldly demanded the giving up to South Carolina the forts at Charleston. Edwin M. Stanton, attorney-general, told Mr. Buchanan he had no right to do it; that it would be treason to the United States. Buchanan's government was full of treason; Washington was a hot-bed of treason. All through the north were sympathizers with southern traitors who had done much to mislead them concerning the true public sentiment of the north. Madness and wickedness ruled the hour. Secession and the Southern Confederacy became accomplished facts under Mr. Buchanan, and by the aid of his partisans in the north. The whole south was seething with disloyalty and secession. Never were so many well-meaning people blindly led into ruin by fire-eating and selfish leaders. Virtue had set down in the lap of vice; the milk of human kindness had soured in christian bosoms; wisdom had lost its brains, and patriotism its heart, all over the volcanic secession realm.

On the eleventh of February Mr. Lincoln started for Washington. At the depot he made this farewell address to his neighbors: "My friends, no one not in my position can appreciate the sadness that I feel at this parting. To this people I owe all that I am. Here I have lived for more than a quarter of a century. Here my children were born, and here one of them lies buried. I know not how soon I shall see you again.

A duty devolves upon me which is greater, perhaps, than that which has devolved upon any other man since the days of Washington. He never would have succeeded except for the aid of divine providence, upon which he at all times relied. I feel that I cannot succeed without the same divine aid which sustained him, and on the same Almighty Being I place my reliance for support, and I hope you, my friends, will pray that I may receive that divine assistance without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is certain. I bid you all an affectionate farewell."

All the cities through which he passed, gave him great receptions. When he reached Philadelphia the plot against his life had become well understood, by the detective who for many days had been in search of it, and it was arranged that he should go to Washington in a sleeping car some two or three days before his family and traveling friends, which he did in quiet and safety. It was not true as reported, that he went concealed in a cloak and Scotch cap.

He went where he was not wanted; probably four out of every five persons in Washington, wishing he could not get there.

#### MR. LINCOLN PRESIDENT.

On the fourth of March, 1861, Mr. Lincoln was inaugurated president. His inaugural address was conciliatory and assuring to the south. Had it been well read and considered in the south, there would have been no more trouble. It was rational, constitutional, humane, patriotic.

He appointed William H. Seward, his great republican competitor, as his secretary. Other great men were put into his cabinet. He acted with the greatest prudence and conciliation. Only seven states had declared for secession. It would be impossible for them to run a government unless more joined them. There were fifteen slave states. It was his policy to save the other eight slave states to the union if possible. All his earlier efforts were made to retain the border states. There was great wisdom in this. It kept the war, when it came, mainly in the slave states. It was his effort, also, to do nothing which

the red-hot seceders could construe into an act of war. He repaired forts, furnished arms, and put defenses in order with the utmost quiet. In every way he dealt patiently and tenderly with the erratic sisters. But when the suppressed secession rage could be no longer restrained, it burst out, in the onslaught upon Fort Sumpter. Now, war was begun by the seceders; and the poor, misled people of the south shouted for joy. How little they knew what they were doing. They had followed their blind leaders to an awful precipice, and now were clamorous to jump off. That cannon boom which so elated the south, filled the north with inexpressible sorrow. In that sorrow was pity for the misled southern people, patriotism for their endangered country, and indignation for the traitor leaders.

At once the thinking and loyal people of the north felt sure, that the first ball that struck Fort Sumpter, struck with a greater force the chain of the slave. Many in the north welcomed it as the quickest way out of the slavery iniquity; yet with a great pain they turned away from their peaceful employments to go south and punish the traitors for their treason. In the north there were two great ruling ideas,—we will save the country and destroy slavery. Yet always there was a good feeling for the southern people. Mr. Lincoln soon found that the ears abroad had been tampered with; that Mr. Buchanan's foreign ministers had poisoned public sentiment abroad and secured southern sympathy almost everywhere. He found, too, that the northern forts and arsenals had been robbed of arms and amunitions, which had been carried south; that President Buchanan's administration, had in many ways been an administration of secession and rebellion.

All these things taught Mr. Lincoln to move with prudence, and to move very slowly,—to wait till the people could learn all the facts and become thoroughly united and aroused in their opposition to rebellion. Many of his friends found fault with him for his good nature toward the south; and for his tardy and weak movements in resisting rebellion.

At half-past four o'clock A.M., April 12, 1861, the rebel batteries opened on Fort Sumpter. April 15, Mr. Lincoln



issued his call for seventy-five thousand men. The writer of this sketch was then pastor of a church in Lawrence, Massachusetts. The sixth regiment of the Massachusetts militia had its headquarters there, though some of its companies were in towns twenty miles away. Colonel Watson, who commanded it, received the call for his regiment at five o'clock P.M. The next morning at 7:30 o'clock the whole regiment were at the depot at Lawrence, and took the cars for Washington. Its way to Washington was an ovation, except at Baltimore, where it was met by a rebel mob and four of its members killed. The first to fall was Sumner H. Needham, a member of the writer's congregation. His body was sent back, and early the next week the first funeral services occasioned by the war were held in his honor, his pastor preaching the sermon, and the other clergymen of the city taking part in the services. The text was from Heb. xi., 4, "He being dead yet speaketh." "He speaks," said his pastor, "from that scene of conflict with a silent yet terrible eloquence which is heard all over our great country, and which stirs the moral indignation of twenty millions of freemen at home and ten times that number abroad. That blow that broke in upon his brain struck upon the conscience of a nation. That wound has a tongue speaking with a trumpet of thunder among the northern hills and on the western prairies." And it did speak, and freemen answered in quick response to the full number of the call.

The others who fell in Baltimore were Charles A. Taylor, a stranger, who enlisted in Boston; Luther C. Ladd and Addison O. Whiting, of Lowell, Massachusetts.

The spirit of this regiment was the spirit of the north. The death of these men was the death of four brothers, which called the whole family to sorrow and self-defense.

The night before Mr. Lincoln made this call, Mr. Douglas, at the instance of Mr. Ashman, of Massachusetts, seconded by Mrs. Douglas, called upon Mr. Lincoln and assured him of his sympathy and coöperation. Mr. Lincoln read him the call, which he had just written. He approved it heartily, only he said it should be for two hundred thousand instead of seventy-

five thousand. The next morning a dispatch went with the call assuring the country of Mr. Douglas' approval. Thence onward till Mr. Douglas' death he coöperated with Mr. Lincoln.

On the seventeenth of April Virginia seceded. North Carolina, Tennessee and Arkansas soon followed.

In July the battle of Bull Run was fought, which proved a rout of the Union army, and was misleading to the rebels in suggesting to them that they had not an equal foe in the soldiers of the north. This mistake led ultimately to a more complete destruction of the south, as it continued the war so long. Over confidence was the weakness of the rebel cause in the beginning. It held them to their evil work till the south was a wreck, while the north was steadily growing in numbers and wealth.

An extra session of Congress was called, and the president was authorized to call out half a million of soldiers and use five hundred millions of dollars. This meant the preservation of the Union.

The first thing the north had to do was to organize and drill its army. It was nearly two years before this was completely done. Many officers had to be tested. During this period many reverses came to the Union cause. But all the time Mr. Lincoln was growing in public estimation and endearing himself to the people as the preserver of that country of which Washington was the father. And all the time the patriotism of the loyal people was developing into a great and permanent passion, which was willing to make all sacrifices for the national honor and cause.

During this most trying time of the war, France and England, to their great disgrace, gave sympathy and aid to the rebellion and the war for slavery. It was a wicked and cruel support of barbarity and crime, done in the greed of gain and the desire to see the United States broken to pieces in the hope that they might gather up the fragments. Slow will the people of the north be to forget this cruel affiliation with rebellion and repudiation of all just principles of inter-national honor and fraternity.

Through all the earlier period of the war, Mr. Lincoln took

all possible pains to express his kindly feeling to the people of the south, and that he had no purpose of destroying slavery if it could be avoided. He had taken his oath to maintain the constitution. If it could be done, he was resolved on doing it. If the constitution could not be preserved, then he would let that go and save the nation.

Many of his friends were greatly tried that he would make no movement against slavery. It was quite a common feeling among them that it was impossible to preserve the Union and slavery. The old abolitionists did not think it desirable to preserve the Union with slavery in it. Many sympathized with them. But Mr. Lincoln had studied prayerfully his duty as a president sworn to obey the constitution. His conclusion was, that as a military necessity and a last resort, he could and must destroy slavery. So he said in a letter to a friend: "When early in the war General Fremont attempted military emancipation, I forbade it because I did not then think it an indispensable necessity. When, a little later, General Cameron, then secretary of war, suggested the arming of the blacks, I objected because I did not then think it an indispensable necessity. When, a little later, General Hunter attempted military emancipation, I again forbade it, because I did not yet think the indispensable necessity had come. When in March and May and July, 1862, I made earnest and successive appeals to the border states to favor compensated emancipation, I believed the indispensable necessity for military emancipation and arming the blacks would come unless averted by that measure. They declined the proposition; and I was, in my best judgment, driven to the alternative of either surrendering the Union, and with it the constitution, or of laying a strong hand upon the colored element. I chose the latter."

When urged to emancipate the slaves, by a body of clergymen, he said: "Whatever shall appear to be God's will I will do."

In the middle of the summer of 1862, when things appeared to be going badly enough, he concluded that he must "change his tactics or lose his game." So he set about preparing an emancipation proclamation. About the first of August, he

called a cabinet meeting. None knew what they came for. He told them that he had called them to read to them a proclamation he had resolved to make, and ask them to criticise it. Mr. Chase "wished the language were stronger." Mr. Blair deprecated the policy. Mr. Seward approved, but did not think this the opportune time, and gave his reasons. So it waited yet longer. Before they separated, he said in a low, solemn voice, "I have promised my God that I will do it." Mr. Chase, who was near him, asked if he understood him. He replied, "I made a solemn vow before God, that if General Lee should be driven back from Pennsylvania, I would crown the result by a declaration of freedom to the slaves."

So September 22, 1862, the proclamation was issued, to take effect January 1, 1863. After it was done he said: "What I did, I did after a very full deliberation, and under a heavy and solemn sense of responsibility. I can only trust in God I have made no mistake." Two years later, he said: "As affairs have turned, it is the central act of my administration, and the great event of the nineteenth century."

After this proclamation, the cause of the Union began to mend. Within a year a hundred thousand colored men were openly allied with the army and the cause, and over half of them carrying muskets. Victory became assured; it was only a question of time. Money and men, and ability and loyalty in the leaders and commanders, were now abundant.

In due time Mr. Lincoln was re-elected, and from that time on the tide of sentiment and events was more and more assured in his behalf. The war became a succession of triumphant victories. At his recommendation, Congress passed an amendment to the constitution abolishing slavery in the United States. His great generals, Grant, Sherman and Sheridan, now had everything well in hand. The surrender of General Lee soon followed, which put an end to the great rebellion.

But in this giddy moment of glory, when the whole loyal north were praising him, he was stealthily approached by John Wilkes Booth, at a theatre, where he had gone with his family, to forget for an hour his burdening cares, and shot in the back

and side of his head. It was a fatal wound. He lived in a state of unconsciousness till morning, and at twenty-two minutes past seven o'clock, April 15, 1865, breathed his last.

The nation which yesterday was jubilant with an abounding joy, was now in tears. Oh that terrible day! How our lips were struck dumb, and our hearts were palsied! Never such a day in America! So the rebellion ended in the martyrdom of the grandest soul of the nation he had saved. How he loved his country and kind! How he loved the people of the south who would not then accept his love, but have since learned that it was sincere, wise and noble. What blessings have come to his country and to humanity and especially to the redeemed south, by his great, honest, hearty life!

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## THE GRAVE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

What was mortal of the great and good martyr president rests in Oak Ridge cemetery, Springfield, Illinois, about two miles out from the city. The tomb in which his body reposes is in the base of the National Lincoln monument, which is one of the finest in this country. The base on which the obelisk rests is seventy-two feet six inches square, with a projection in front and rear for the catacomb and memorial hall, making a length of one hundred and nineteen feet, six inches. The height of the base from the terrace at the bottom, is fifteen feet and ten inches. Around the top of the base is a rich, strong railing. A finely wrought pedestal, twenty-eight feet four inches across, with four elegant pieces of bronze statuary at the corners, sustains the obelisk. The obelisk is square, eighty-two feet and six inches high from the base. The statue of Lincoln stands in front of the obelisk on a separate pedestal, and is eleven feet in height, and stands thirty-five feet and six inches above the terrace. The whole height from the terrace to the apex of the obelisk is ninety-eight feet and four and a half inches. The statue holds in its right hand an open scroll representing the

Proclamation of Emancipation. The whole cost of the monument, statuary, statue and coat of arms, was two hundred and six thousand five hundred and fifty dollars. It is a fitting monument to the great emancipator.

The tomb is in the catacomb which is in the front projection of the base. The body is enclosed in an air-tight lead case. This is in a sarcophagus; and this in a strong vault. An attempt was made some years ago to disturb, perhaps to steal, the body of the martyred president. When it was discovered, an end of the sarcophagus had been broken off and an opening made in to the lead coffin, but being discovered before any further damage was done, the broken place was repaired, further securities adopted, and greater precautions instituted, so that no further attempts have been made upon the security and sacredness of the place.

Under the pedestal on which the statue of the president stands, is the simple inscription:

### Lincoln.

Around the large pedestal that sustains the obelisk, on small shield-like projections, are the abbreviations of the several states. The top of the base and the platform around the pedestal of the obelisk is reached by two flights of steps of twenty-four steps each, with heavy railings and pilasters. These are on either side of the catecomb. It must be seen to be appreciated.

